

REMARKS

Upon entry of this amendment, claims 1-53 are pending. Claims 1, 3-11, 14-18, 20 and 21 have been amended. Applicant has added new claims 22-53. In view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration and allowance of all of the pending claims are respectfully requested.

Claim Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C §103(a) as allegedly being obvious over MacNaughton, et al. (U.S. Patent 5,796,393) in view of Paul (U.S. Patent 5,999,932). Applicant traverses this rejection on at least the following basis.

Independent claim 1 recites, in part, a method comprising:

determining at the incentive host server available incentives using at least the first identifier and the NID, wherein the NID is used to identify available incentives in an incentive server database associated with the NID.

By contrast, MacNaughton et al. is directed to a Community Browser that allegedly enhances a user's on-line experience by enabling those with similar interests or shared circumstances to enjoy on-going social relations (see MacNaughton et al., col. 3, lines 8-10). In particular, MacNaughton et al. discloses a community server 18 that interacts with a membership database 44 to determine if a user belongs to the community associated with the URL (see MacNaughton et al., col. 8, lines 10-12). If it is determined that the user belongs to a community, the user is given the opportunity to enter the community (see MacNaughton et al., col. 8, lines 12-14). The user may then access all information pertaining to the community, the same as any other community member (see MacNaughton et al., col. 8, lines 14-23).

The Examiner acknowledged in the October 23, 2003 Office Action that MacNaughton et al. does not disclose providing identifying information to filter the

available incentives based on an exclusion or inclusion list, and instead relies on Paul for disclosing this feature (see page 3, second full paragraph of the October 23, 2003 Office Action).

Paul is directed to a system for eliminating unsolicited electronic mail and stores a user-specific inclusion list including identification data for identifying e-mails desired by the user (see Paul, Abstract). Data from one or more fields of incoming electronic mail messages are compared with the identification data stored in the user inclusion list (see Paul, Abstract). E-mail messages with matching data are forwarded to the respective user's mailbox; and messages without matching data are sorted using one or more heuristic sorting methods and categorized either as "junk", or "new" (see Paul col. 1, lines 14-20). Each message is displayed to the user in accordance with its respective status (see Paul col. 1, lines 19-20).

Paul, however, fails to disclose identifying incentives associated with a network server identifier, nor is the user-created inclusion list of Paul the same as the type of association referred to in the claims.

Therefore, Paul is deficient for at least these reasons. Specifically, neither Paul nor MacNaughton et al. disclose or suggest determining at the incentive host server available incentives using at least the first identifier and the NID, wherein the NID is used to identify available incentives in an incentive server database associated with the NID, as recited in claim 1.

Claim 1 is further allowable for at least the additional reason, the neither MacNaughton et al. nor Paul, whether taken alone or in combination teach determining available incentives, as recited in claim 1.

In particular, the Examiner relied on MacNaughton et al. for allegedly disclosing receiving incentive information from a host reflecting available incentives corresponding to identifying information. (Office Action, page 3). MacNaughton et al., however, does not discuss incentives nor receiving information reflecting available incentives corresponding to a subscriber identification and a network server identification.

Rather, MacNaughton et al. teaches notifying users of capabilities that are associated with communities and indicating or referencing additional information content as well as interaction options or methods that may be of interest to the user. (Col. 7: 14-19).

As such, contrary to the Examiner's assertion, MacNaughton et al. does not disclose providing access to incentives. Rather, as discussed above, MacNaughton et al. discloses providing notifications regarding capabilities of a community.

The portion of MacNaughton et al. cited by the Examiner (col. 9:1-41) for allegedly disclosing receiving incentive information reflecting available incentives fails to teach what is alleged. This section discloses that the user may belong to multiple communities having particular capabilities and that each community is identified by a text name and an identification number, and has an associated port number through which a connection may be established with a specific community server. As such, contrary to the Examiner's assertion, this section does not discuss receiving incentive information reflecting available incentives.

As such, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 is allowable for at least the additional reason that the cited references fail to teach or suggest determining at the incentive host server available incentives as recited in claim 1.

Since neither MacNaughton et al. nor Paul whether taken alone or in combination, disclose or suggest the invention claimed in independent claims 1, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 is in condition for allowance. Independent claims 8, 11, 18, and 21 include similar recitations to those discussed above. As such, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 8, 11, 18, and 21 are likewise allowable for at least the above discussed reasons. Applicant further respectfully submits that dependent claims 2-7, 9 and 10, 12-17, 19, 20, and 22-33 are likewise allowable at least due to their dependence on independent claims 1, 8, 11, 18, and 21. For at least the foregoing reasons, reconsideration and allowance of these claims are requested.

New dependent claim 22 is allowable for at least the additional reason that none

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of the cited references teach or suggest a method for accessing coupons in a network. Dependent claims 25, 28, and 31 include similar recitations to claim 22. As such, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 25, 28, and 31 are likewise allowable for at least this additional reason.

With regard to new claims 34-53, Applicants submit that these new claims are believed to be allowable over the cited references.


Having addressed each of the foregoing rejections, it is respectfully submitted that a full and complete response has been made to the Office Action and that the application is in condition for allowance. Notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference or personal interview would advance prosecution of this application in any manner, the undersigned attorney stands ready to conduct such a conference at the convenience of the Examiner.

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Respectfully submitted,

Customer Number
29315



Charles W. Chesney
Registration No. 45,874
MINTZ, LEVIN, COHN, FERRIS, GLOVSKY AND
POPEO P.C.
12010 Sunset Hills Road, Suite 900
Reston, Virginia 20190